

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 461

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, VN, VS, SW

SUBJECT: SWEDISH FOREIGN MINISTER'S VIETNAM SPEECH

REF: STOCKHOLM 448

1. FOREIGN MINISTER ANDERSSON'SKAN. 27 SPEECH ON VIETNAM
(REFTEL) VOICES THE SHARPEST PUBLIC CRITICISM OF US VIETNAM
POLICY BY A SENIOR SWEDISH OFFICIAL SINCE MY ARRIVAL HERE
IN MAY OF LAST YEAR.

2. APPARENTLY IN VIEW OF THE RECENT NORTH VIETNAMESE OFFENSIVE
ANDTHE PRESIDENT'S REQUEST FOR AN ADDITIONAL 300 MILLION
DOLLARS IN AID FOR THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT, THE GOS IS CONVINCED
THAT US POLICY IS AT A CRUCIAL STAGE, AND THEREFORE WISHES
TO GO ON RECORD AS STRONGLY OPPOSING SUCH A US MOVE. PROBABLY
THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ENCOURAGED BY PUBLICITY GIVEN THE
OPPOSITION OF SOME DEMOCRATIC SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN TO
ADDITIONAL AID. FURTHERMORE, THE GOS HAS BEEN UNDER CONSIDERABLE
PRESSURE FROM LEFTWING ELEMENTS REPRESENTING THE LOCAL
VIETNAM LOBBY" TO RECOGNIZE THE PRG, AND HENCE, THE GOVERN-
MENT MAY HAVE WISHED TO SOFTEN ITS REFUSAL TO DO SO BY
INVEIGHING AGAINST THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT AND US POLICY IN
VIETNAM. THERE MAY BE OTHER FACTORS AS WELL CONCEIVABLY
EXTERNAL-- IN THE GOVERNMENTS DECISION TO TAKE ABRUPTLY
THIS CRITICAL STANCE TOWARDS THE US.

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3. NEVERTHELESS, I CONSIDER THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAS

GONE BEYOND PERMISSIBLE BOUNDS IN HIS SPEECH. IT IS CLEARLY A ONE-SIDED, DISTORTED VERSION OF EVENTS IN INDOCHINA. THE GOVERNMENT'S WILLINGNESS TO USE A BIASED, ANTI-US FORUM SUCH AS THE SWEDISH COMMITTEE FOR VIETNAM TO LAUNCH A PUBLIC ATTACK ON THE UNITED STATES, AND THE ASSERTION THAT AMERICAN POLICY HAS AMOUNTED TO A "TAKE-OVER" OF THE FRENCH COLONIAL WAR AND CONSTITUTES A "DISGRACE TO DEMOCRACY," ARE UNACCEPTABLE.

4. I WILL CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER ANDERSSON TOMORROW AFTERNOON TO EXPRESS OUR SURPRISE AND CONCERN THAT HE HAS CHOSEN TO PUBLICLY CRITICIZE THE UNITED STATES IN SUCH A FORUM, AND TO MAKE A ONE-SIDED, EXTREMELY BIASED PRESENTATION OF THE TRUE SITUATION IN VIETNAM.
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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